

Do You Recognize Barack Obama in These Texts? - First Series

By: [Dr. Sam Vaknin](#)

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I also recommend that you get acquainted my previous articles:

[Barack Obama: A Narcissist, or Merely Narcissistic?](#)

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/obama.html>

[Obama's Nobel Prize will Exacerbate His Narcissistic Tendencies](#)

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/obama2.html>

By now, the world has had two years of exposure to Barack Obama. We all have followed his exploits and antics; have watched him on television; have heard his speeches; have witnessed his scripted and spontaneous interactions with family, subordinates, co-workers, and friends.

This is the first in a series of articles examining Obama's psychological makeup in minute detail.

Following are descriptions of narcissistic and psychopathic traits. They are common among people diagnosed with the [Narcissistic Personality Disorder \(NPD\)](#) (<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/npdglance.html>) and the Antisocial Personality Disorder (psychopaths). Read these texts.

Do you recognize Barack Obama in them?

Narcissists are self-sufficient and consider themselves peerless. The Narcissist's "friends", companions, and acolytes provide the narcissist with an obsequious, unthreatening, audience

and with the kind of unconditional and unthinking obedience that confirms to him his omnipotence. They are sufficiently vacuous to make the narcissist look sharp and omniscient – but not so asinine as to be instantly discernible as such. They are the perfect backdrop, never likely to attain centre stage and overshadow their master.

Rings a bell? Continue to read about this specific trait or behavior here:

[The Narcissist and His Friends](http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/journal85.html)

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/journal85.html>

In the narcissist's surrealistic world, even language is pathologized. It mutates into a weapon of self-defence, a verbal fortification, a medium without a message, replacing words with duplicitous and ambiguous vocables.

Narcissists (and, often, by contagion, their unfortunate victims) don't talk, or communicate. They fend off. They hide and evade and avoid and disguise. In their planet of capricious and arbitrary unpredictability, of shifting semiotic and semantic dunes - they perfect the ability to say nothing in lengthy, Castro-like speeches.

Rings a bell? Continue to read about this specific trait or behavior here:

[The Weapon of Language](http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/journal34.html)

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/journal34.html>

The narcissist is the guru at the centre of a cult. Like other gurus, he demands complete obedience from his flock: his spouse, his offspring, other family members, friends, and colleagues. He feels entitled to adulation and special treatment by his followers. He punishes the wayward and the straying lambs. He enforces discipline, adherence to his teachings, and common goals. The less accomplished he is in reality – the more stringent his mastery and the more pervasive the brainwashing.

Rings a bell? Continue to read about this specific trait or behavior here:

[The Cult of the Narcissist](http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/journal79.html)

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/journal79.html>

The "modesty" displayed by narcissists is false. It is mostly and merely verbal. It is couched in flourishing phrases, emphasised to absurdity, repeated unnecessarily – usually to the point of causing gross inconvenience to the listener. The real aim of such behaviour and its subtext are exactly the opposite of common modesty.

It is intended to either aggrandise the narcissist or to protect his grandiosity from scrutiny and possible erosion. Such modest outbursts precede inflated, grandiosity-laden statements made by the narcissist and pertaining to fields of human knowledge and activity in which he is sorely lacking.

Narcissistic leadership often poses as a rebellion against the "old ways": against the hegemonic culture, the upper classes, the established religions, the superpowers, the corrupt order. Narcissistic movements are [puerile](#), a reaction to [narcissistic injuries](#) inflicted upon a narcissistic (and rather psychopathic) toddler nation-state, or group, or upon the leader.

Rings a bell? Continue to read about this specific trait or behavior here:

[The False Modesty and Fake Folksiness of the Narcissist](#)

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/faq36.html>

[Narcissistic and Psychopathic Leaders](#)

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/15.html>

The narcissist's lies are not goal-orientated. This is what makes his constant dishonesty both disconcerting and incomprehensible. The narcissist lies at the drop of a hat, needlessly, and almost ceaselessly. He lies in order to avoid the Grandiosity Gap - when the abyss between fact and (narcissistic) fiction becomes too gaping to ignore.

The narcissist lies in order to preserve appearances, uphold fantasies, support the tall (and impossible) tales of his False Self and extract Narcissistic Supply from unsuspecting sources, who are not yet on to him. To the narcissist, confabulation is not merely a way of life - but life itself.

Rings a bell? Continue to read about this specific trait or behavior here:

[The Confabulated Life and Biography of the Narcissist](#)

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/journal75.html>

The narcissist is confident that people find him irresistible. His unflinching charm is part of his self-imputed omnipotence. This inane conviction is what makes the narcissist a "*pathological charmer*". The somatic narcissist and the histrionic flaunt their sex appeal, virility or femininity, sexual prowess, musculature, physique, training, or athletic achievements.

The cerebral narcissist seeks to enchant and entrance his audience with intellectual pyrotechnics. Many narcissists brag about their wealth, health, possessions, collections, spouses, children, personal history, family tree – in short: anything that garners them attention and renders them alluring.

Rings a bell? Continue to read about this specific trait or behavior here:

[The Narcissist as a Pathological Charmer](#)

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/case05.html>

The narcissist has a complicated relationship with his parents (mainly with his mother, but, at times, also with his father). As Primary Objects, the narcissist's parents are often a source of frustration which leads to repressed or to self-directed aggression. They traumatise the

narcissist during his infancy and childhood and thwart his healthy development well into his late adolescence.

Rings a bell? Continue to read about this specific trait or behavior here:

[The Narcissist's Dead Parents](#)

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/faq54.html>

The narcissist perceives every disagreement – let alone criticism – coming from people whom he does not consider to be his "peers" (e.g., the media) as nothing short of a threat. He reacts defensively. He becomes indignant, aggressive and cold. He detaches emotionally for fear of yet another (narcissistic) injury. He devalues the person who made the disparaging remark.

By holding the critic in contempt, by diminishing the stature of the discordant conversant – the narcissist minimises the impact of the disagreement or criticism on himself. This is a defence mechanism known as cognitive dissonance.

Rings a bell? Continue to read about this specific trait or behavior here:

[Narcissists, Disagreement and Criticism](#)

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/faq73.html>

The narcissist constantly consumes (really, preys upon) adoration, admiration, approval, applause, attention and other forms of Narcissistic Supply.

The normal person is likely to welcome a moderate amount of attention – verbal and non-verbal – in the form of affirmation, approval, or admiration. Too much attention, though, is perceived as onerous and is avoided. Destructive and negative criticism is avoided altogether.

The narcissist, in contrast, is the mental equivalent of an alcoholic. He is insatiable. He directs his whole behaviour, in fact his life, to obtain these pleasurable titbits of attention. He embeds them in a coherent, completely biased, picture of himself. He uses them to regulate his labile sense of self-worth and self-esteem.

To elicit constant interest, he projects to others a [confabulated](#), fictitious version of himself, known as the [False Self](#). The False Self is everything the narcissist is not: omniscient, omnipotent, charming, intelligent, rich, or well-connected.

The narcissist then proceeds to harvest reactions to this projected image from family members, friends, co-workers, neighbours, business partners and from colleagues. If these – the adulation, admiration, attention, fear, respect, applause, affirmation – are not forthcoming, the narcissist demands them, or extorts them. Money, compliments, a favourable critique, an appearance in the media, a sexual conquest are all converted into the same currency in the narcissist's mind.

Rings a bell? Continue to read about this specific trait or behavior here:

Narcissists, Narcissistic Supply and Sources of Supply

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/faq76.html>

"Haughty" body language – The narcissist adopts a physical posture which implies and exudes an air of superiority, seniority, hidden powers, mysteriousness, amused indifference, etc. Though the narcissist usually maintains sustained and piercing eye contact, he often refrains from physical proximity (he is "territorial").

The narcissist takes part in social interactions – even mere banter – condescendingly, from a position of supremacy and faux "magnanimity and largesse". But he rarely mingles socially and prefers to remain the "observer", or the "lone wolf".

Rings a bell? Continue to read about this specific trait or behavior here:

How to Recognise a Narcissist?

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/faq58.html>

Two narcissists of the same type (somatic, cerebral, classic, compensatory, [inverted](#), etc.) cannot maintain a [stable](#), long-term full-fledged, and functional relationship.

There are two types of narcissists: the somatic narcissist and the cerebral narcissist. The somatic type relies on his body and sexuality as Sources of Narcissistic Supply. The cerebral narcissist uses his intellect, his intelligence and his professional achievements to obtain the same. The cerebral narcissist is a know-it-all, haughty and intelligent "computer". He uses his awesome intellect, or knowledge (real or pretended) to secure adoration, adulation and admiration. To him, his body and its maintenance are a burden and a distraction.

Thus, if both members of the couple are cerebral narcissists, for instance if both of them are scholars – the resulting competition prevents them from serving as ample Sources of Narcissistic Supply to each other. Finally the mutual admiration society crumbles.

Consumed by the pursuit of their own narcissistic gratification, they have no time or energy or will left to cater to the narcissistic needs of their partner. Moreover, the partner is perceived as a dangerous and vicious contender for a scarce resource: Sources of Narcissistic Supply. This may be less true if the two narcissists work in totally unrelated academic or intellectual fields.

But if the narcissists involved are of different types, if one of them is cerebral and the other one somatic, a long-term partnership based on the mutual provision of Narcissistic Supply can definitely survive.

Rings a bell? Continue to read about this specific trait or behavior here:

Narcissistic Couples and Narcissistic Types

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/faq60.html>

The Cerebral vs. the Somatic Narcissist

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/faq60.html>

God is everything the narcissist ever wants to be: omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, admired, much discussed, and awe inspiring. God is the narcissist's wet dream, his ultimate grandiose fantasy. But God comes handy in other ways as well.

The narcissist alternately idealizes and devalues figures of authority.

In the idealization phase, he strives to emulate them, he admires them, imitate them (often ludicrously), and defends them. They cannot go wrong, or be wrong. The narcissist regards them as bigger than life, infallible, perfect, whole, and brilliant. But as the narcissist's unrealistic and inflated expectations are inevitably frustrated, he begins to devalue his former idols.

Rings a bell? Continue to read about this specific trait or behavior here:

[For the Love of God: Narcissists and Religion](#)

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/journal45.html>

The narcissist is not really interested in publicity per se. Narcissists are misleading. The narcissist appears to love himself – and, really, he abhors himself. Similarly, he appears to be interested in becoming a celebrity – and, in reality, he is concerned with the **REACTIONS** to his fame: people watch him, notice him, talk about him, debate his actions – therefore he exists.

The narcissist goes around "hunting and collecting" the way the expressions on people's faces change when they notice him. He places himself at the centre of attention, or even as a figure of controversy. He constantly and recurrently pesters those nearest and dearest to him in a bid to reassure himself that he is not losing his fame, his magic touch, the attention of his social milieu.

Truly, the narcissist is not choosy. If he can become famous as a writer – he writes, if as a businessman – he conducts business. He switches from one field to the other with ease and without remorse because in all of them he is present without conviction, bar the conviction that he must (and deserves to) get famous.

Rings a bell? Continue to read about this specific trait or behavior here:

[The Narcissist's Addiction to Fame and Celebrity](#)

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/faq19.html>

Psychopaths are said to be fearless, imperturbable, and sang-froid. Their pain tolerance is very high. Still, contrary to popular perceptions and psychiatric orthodoxy, some psychopaths are actually [anxious](#) and fearful. Their psychopathy is a defense against an underlying and all-pervasive anxiety, either hereditary, or brought on by early childhood abuse.

Rings a bell? Continue to read about this specific trait or behavior here:

[The Psychopath and Antisocial](#)

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/personalitydisorders16.html>

(To be Continued in the Second Series)

Obama's Nobel Prize will Exacerbate His Narcissistic Tendencies

By: [Dr. Sam Vaknin](#)

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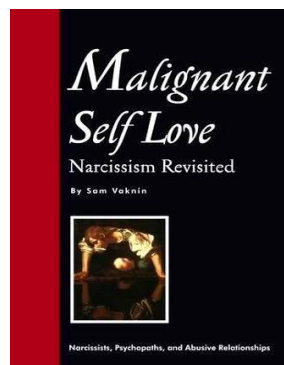
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Within a single year, Barrack Obama had been elected to the Presidency of the United States and had won the Nobel Peace Prize. While the merits of the first achievement are debatable, there is a consensus, even among his most ardent supporters, fans, and acolytes that he absolutely does not deserve the second honor.

What happens to a narcissist (Obama) whose grandiose delusions suddenly come true? What are the psychological effects on a narcissist when his fantasies of success and perfection materialize, even though his real-life accomplishments do not warrant such a turn of events and are wildly incommensurate with the adulatory feedback he keeps getting?

I. The Narcissist's Delusions of Grandeur

A **delusion** is "a false belief based on incorrect inference about external reality that is firmly sustained despite what almost everyone else believes and despite what constitutes incontrovertible and obvious proof or evidence to the contrary". **Delusion** is, therefore, a belief, idea, or conviction firmly held despite abundant information to the contrary. The partial or complete loss of reality test is the first indication of a psychotic state or episode. Beliefs, ideas, or convictions shared by other people, members of the same collective, are not, strictly speaking, delusions, although they may be hallmarks of shared psychosis.

There are many types of delusions. The narcissist typically holds **grandiose-magical** convictions that he is important, omnipotent, omniscient, irresistibly charming, brilliant, perfect, possessed of occult powers, deserving of special treatment (entitlement), or a historic figure of cosmic-messianic significance.

II. The Narcissist's Reaction to Success: The Grandiosity Bubble

A Grandiosity Bubble is an imagined, self-aggrandizing narrative involving the narcissist and elements from his real life: people around him, places he frequents, or conversations he is having. The narcissist weaves a story incorporating these facts, inflating them in the process and endowing them with bogus internal meaning and consistency. In other words: he confabulates – but, this time, his confabulation is loosely based on reality.

In the process, the narcissist re-invents himself and his life to fit the new-fangled tale. He recasts himself in newly adopted roles. He suddenly fancies himself an actor, a guru, a political activist, an entrepreneur, or an irresistible hunk. He modifies his behaviour to conform to these new functions. He gradually morphs into the fabricated character and "becomes" the fictitious protagonist he has created.

All the mechanisms of pathological narcissism are at work during the bubble phase. The narcissist idealizes the situation, the other "actors", and the environment. He tries to control and manipulate his milieu into buttressing his false notions and perceptions. Faced with an inevitable Grandiosity Gap (the abyss between his fantasies and reality), he becomes disillusioned and bitter and devalues and discards the people, places, and circumstances involved in the bubble.

III. When Reality Intrudes: The Grandiosity Gap and the Grandiosity Hangover

The grandiose fantasies of the narcissist inevitably and invariably clash with his drab, routine, and mundane reality. We call this constant dissonance the Grandiosity Gap. Sometimes the gap is so yawning that even the narcissist - however dimly - recognizes its existence. Still, this insight into his real situation fails to alter his behaviour. The narcissist knows that his grandiose fantasies are incommensurate with his accomplishments, knowledge, status, actual wealth (or lack thereof), physical constitution, or sex appeal - yet, he keeps behaving as though this were untrue (i.e., keeps denying reality's intrusions).

The situation is further exacerbated by periods of relative success in the narcissist's past. Has-been and also-ran narcissists suffer from a Grandiosity Hangover. They may have once been rich, famous, powerful, brilliant, or sexually irresistible - but they no longer are. Still, they continue to behave as though little has changed.

The Grandiosity Hangover and the Grandiosity Gap are the two major vulnerabilities of the narcissist. By exploiting them, the narcissist can be effortlessly manipulated. This is especially true when the narcissist is confronted with authority, finds himself in an inferior position, or when his [Narcissistic Supply](#) (admiration, adulation, affirmation, or any form of attention) is deficient or uncertain.

IV. The Roller-Coaster Narcissist

The narcissist cathezes (emotionally invests) with grandiosity everything he owns or does: his nearest and dearest, his work, his environment. But, as time passes, this pathologically intense aura fades. The narcissist finds fault with things and people he had first thought impeccable. He energetically berates and denigrates that which he equally zealously exulted and praised only a short while before.

This inexorable and (to the outside world) disconcerting roller-coaster is known as the ["Idealization-Devaluation Cycle"](#). It involves serious cognitive and emotional deficits and a formidable series of triggered defence mechanisms.

The Cycle starts with the narcissist's hunger for [Narcissistic Supply](#): the panoply of reactions to the narcissist's [False Self](#) (his feigned facade of omnipotence and omniscience). The narcissist uses these inputs to regulate his fluctuating sense of self-worth.

It is important to distinguish between the various components of the process of Narcissistic Supply:

1. The **Trigger of Supply** is the person or object that provokes the source into yielding Narcissistic Supply by confronting the source with information about the narcissist's False Self;

2. The *Source of Narcissistic Supply* is the person that provides the Narcissistic Supply;
3. *Narcissistic Supply* is the reaction of the source to the trigger.

The narcissist homes in on Triggers and Sources of Narcissistic Supply - people, possessions, creative works, money – and imbues these sources and triggers with attributed uniqueness, perfection, brilliance, and grandiose qualities (omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience). He filters out any data that contradict these fantastic misperceptions. He rationalizes, intellectualizes, denies, represses, projects – and, in general, defends against – contrarian information.

The narcissist realizes and resents his dependence on Narcissistic Supply. Moreover, deep inside, he is aware of the fact that his False Self is an untenable sham. Still, [omnipotent as he holds himself to be](#), the narcissist believes in his ability to make it all come true, to asymptotically approximate his grandiose fantasies. He is firmly convinced that, given enough time and practice, he can and will become his lofty False Self.

Hence the narcissist's idea of progress: the frustrating and masochistic pursuit of an ever-receding mirage of perfection, brilliance, omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence. The narcissist dumps old sources and triggers of supply because he is convinced that he is perpetually improving and that he deserves better and that "better" is just around the corner. He is driven by his own impossible Ego Ideal.

V. Some Successful Narcissists Develop Paranoia

Paranoid ideation - the narcissist's deep-rooted conviction that he is being persecuted by his inferiors, detractors, or powerful ill-wishers - serves two psychodynamic purposes. It upholds the narcissist's grandiosity and it fends off intimacy.

Grandiosity Enhancing Paranoia

Being the target of relentless, ubiquitous, and unjust persecution proves to the paranoid narcissist how important and feared he is. Being hounded by the mighty and the privileged validates his pivotal role in the scheme of things. Only vital, weighty, crucial, essential principals are thus bullied and intimidated, followed and harassed, stalked and intruded upon, goes his unconscious inner dialog. The narcissist consistently baits authority figures into punishing him and thus into upholding his delusional self-image as worthy of their attention. This provocative behaviour is called Projective Identification.

The paranoid delusions of the narcissist are always grandiose, "cosmic", or "historical". His pursuers are influential and formidable. They are after his unique possessions, out to exploit his expertise and special traits, or to force him to abstain and refrain from certain actions. The narcissist feels that he is at the centre of intrigues and conspiracies of colossal magnitudes.

Alternatively, the narcissist feels victimized by mediocre bureaucrats and intellectual dwarves who consistently fail to appreciate his outstanding - really, unparalleled - talents, skills, and accomplishments. Being haunted by his challenged inferiors substantiates the narcissist's comparative superiority. Driven by pathological envy, these pygmies collude to defraud him, badger him, deny him his due, denigrate, isolate, and ignore him.

The narcissist projects onto this second class of lesser persecutors his own deleterious emotions and transformed aggression: hatred, rage, and seething jealousy.

The narcissist's paranoid streak is likeliest to erupt when he lacks Narcissistic Supply. The regulation of his labile sense of self-worth is dependent upon external stimuli - adoration, adulation, affirmation, applause, notoriety, fame, infamy, and, in general, attention of any kind.

When such attention is deficient, the narcissist compensates by confabulating. He constructs ungrounded narratives in which he is the protagonist and uses them to force his human environment into complicity.

Put simply, he provokes people to pay attention to him by misbehaving or behaving oddly.

Intimacy Retarding Paranoia

Paranoia is used by the narcissist to ward off or reverse intimacy. The narcissist is threatened by intimacy because it reduces him to ordinariness by exposing his weaknesses and shortcomings and by causing him to act "normally". The narcissist also dreads the encounter with his deep buried emotions - hurt, envy, anger, aggression - likely to be foisted on him in an intimate relationship.

The paranoid narrative legitimizes intimacy repelling behaviors such as keeping one's distance, secrecy, aloofness, reclusion, aggression, intrusion on privacy, lying, desultoriness, itinerancy, unpredictability, and idiosyncratic or eccentric reactions. Gradually, the narcissist succeeds to alienate and wear down all his friends, colleagues, well-wishers, and mates.

As time passes, even the narcissist's closest, nearest, and dearest, his family come to feel emotionally detached and "burnt out".

The paranoid narcissist ends life as an oddball recluse: derided, feared, and loathed in equal measures. His paranoia, exacerbated by repeated rejections and ageing, pervades his entire life and diminishes his creativity, adaptability, and functioning. The narcissist personality, buffeted by paranoia, turns ossified and brittle. Finally, atomized and useless, it succumbs and gives way to a great void. The narcissist is consumed.

VI. Narcissistic Coping Methods with Failure (Read this Supplementary Document: [The Day Barrack Obama, Narcissist Snaps and Loses It](#))

When the successful narcissist fails - which inevitably happens from time to time - he resorts to self-delusion. Unable to completely ignore contrarian opinion and data, he transmutes them. Unable to face the dismal failure that he is, the narcissist partially withdraws from reality. To soothe and salve the pain of disillusionment, he administers to his aching soul a mixture of lies, distortions, half-truths and outlandish interpretations of events around him. These solutions can be classified thus:

The Delusional Narrative Solutions

The narcissist constructs a narrative in which he figures as the hero - brilliant, perfect, irresistibly handsome, destined for great things, entitled, powerful, wealthy, the centre of

attention, etc. The bigger the strain on this delusional charade - the greater the gap between fantasy and reality - the more the delusion coalesces and solidifies.

Finally, if it is sufficiently protracted, it replaces reality and the narcissist's reality test deteriorates. He withdraws his bridges and may become Schizotypal, catatonic, or schizoid.

The Reality Renouncing Solutions

The narcissist renounces reality. To his mind, those who pusillanimously fail to recognize his unbound talents, innate superiority, overarching brilliance, benevolent nature, entitlement, cosmically important mission, perfection, etc. - do not deserve consideration. The narcissist's natural affinity with the criminal - his lack of empathy and compassion, his deficient social skills, his disregard for social laws and morals - now erupts and blossoms. He becomes a full fledged antisocial (sociopath or psychopath). He ignores the wishes and needs of others, he breaks the law, he violates all rights - natural and legal, he holds people in contempt and disdain, he derides society and its codes, he punishes the ignorant ingrates - that, to his mind, drove him to this state - by acting criminally and by jeopardizing their safety, lives, or property.

The Paranoid Schizoid Solution

The narcissist develops persecutory delusions. He perceives slights and insults where none were intended. He becomes subject to ideas of reference (people are gossiping about him, mocking him, prying into his affairs, cracking his e-mail, etc.). He is convinced that he is the centre of malign and mal-intentioned attention. People are conspiring to humiliate him, punish him, abscond with his property, delude him, impoverish him, confine him physically or intellectually, censor him, impose on his time, force him to action (or to inaction), frighten him, coerce him, surround and besiege him, change his mind, part with his values, even murder him, and so on.

Some narcissists withdraw completely from a world populated with such minacious and ominous objects (really projections of internal objects and processes). They avoid all social contact, except the most necessary.

They refrain from meeting people, falling in love, having sex, talking to others, or even corresponding with them. In short: they become schizoids - not out of social shyness, but out of what they feel to be their choice.

'The world does not deserve me' - goes the inner refrain - 'and I shall waste none of my time and resources on it.'

The Paranoid Aggressive (Explosive) Solution

Other narcissists who develop persecutory delusions, resort to an aggressive stance, a more violent resolution of their internal conflict. They become verbally, psychologically, situationally (and, very rarely, physically) abusive. They insult, castigate, chastise, berate, demean, and deride their nearest and dearest (often well wishers and loved ones). They explode in unprovoked displays of indignation, righteousness, condemnation, and blame.

Theirs is an exegetic Bedlam. They interpret everything - even the most innocuous, inadvertent, and innocent - as designed to provoke and humiliate them. They sow fear, revulsion, hate, and malignant envy. They flail against the windmills of reality - a pathetic, forlorn, sight. But often they cause real and lasting damage - fortunately, mainly to themselves."

The Masochistic Avoidant Solution

The narcissist is angered by the lack of narcissistic supply. He directs some of this fury inwards, punishing himself for his "failure". This masochistic behavior has the added "benefit" of forcing the narcissist's closest to assume the roles of dismayed spectators or of persecutors and thus, either way, to pay him the attention that he craves.

Self-administered punishment often manifests as self-handicapping masochism - a narcissistic cop-out. By undermining his work, his relationships, and his efforts, the increasingly fragile narcissist avoids additional criticism and censure (negative supply). Self-inflicted failure is the narcissist's doing and thus proves that he is the master of his own fate.

Masochistic narcissists keep finding themselves in self-defeating circumstances which render success impossible - and "an objective assessment of their performance improbable" (Millon, 2000). They act carelessly, withdraw in mid-effort, are constantly fatigued, bored, or disaffected and thus passive-aggressively sabotage their lives. Their suffering is defiant and by "deciding to abort" they reassert their omnipotence.

The narcissist's pronounced and public misery and self-pity are compensatory and "reinforce self-esteem against overwhelming convictions of worthlessness" (Millon, 2000). His tribulations and anguish render him, in his eyes, unique, saintly, virtuous, righteous, resilient, and significant. They are, in other words, self-generated narcissistic supply.

VII. Narcissists Lie and Confabulate to Preserve the Appearance of Invincibility and Success

It is healthy to daydream and fantasize. It is the antechamber of life and its circumstances. It is a process of preparing for eventualities, embellished and decorated. Grandiosity is different, though.

Delusional grandiosity - especially when supported by unwarranted and unjustified success - has four components.

Omnipotence

The narcissist believes in his omnipotence. "Believe" in this context is a weak word. He knows. It is a cellular certainty, almost biological, it flows in his blood and permeates every niche of his being. The narcissist "knows" that he can do anything he chooses to do and excel in it. What the narcissist does, what he excels at, what he achieves, depends only on his volition. To his mind, there is no other determinant.

Hence his rage when confronted with disagreement or opposition – not only because of the audacity of his, evidently inferior, adversaries. But because it threatens his world view, it endangers his feeling of omnipotence. The narcissist is often fatuously daring, adventurous,

experimentative and curious precisely due to this hidden assumption of "can-do". He is genuinely surprised and devastated when he fails, when the "universe" does not arrange itself, magically, to accommodate his unbounded fantasies, when it (and people in it) does not comply with his whims and wishes.

He often denies away such discrepancies, deletes them from his memory. As a result, he remembers his life as a patchy quilt of unrelated events and people.

Omniscience

The narcissist often pretends to know everything, in every field of human knowledge and endeavour. He lies and prevaricates to avoid the exposure of his ignorance. He resorts to numerous subterfuges to support his God-like omniscience.

Where his knowledge fails him – he feigns authority, fakes superiority, quotes from non-existent sources, embeds threads of truth in a canvass of falsehoods. He transforms himself into an artist of intellectual prestidigitation. As he gets older, this invidious quality may recede, or, rather, metamorphose. He may now claim more confined expertise.

He may no longer be ashamed to admit his ignorance and his need to learn things outside the fields of his real or self-proclaimed expertise. But this "improvement" is merely optical. Within his "territory", the narcissist is still as fiercely defensive and possessive as ever.

Many narcissists are avowed autodidacts, unwilling to subject their knowledge and insights to peer scrutiny, or, for that matter, to any scrutiny. The narcissist keeps re-inventing himself, adding new fields of knowledge as he goes. This creeping intellectual annexation is a round about way of reverting to his erstwhile image as the erudite "Renaissance man".

Omnipresence

Even the narcissist cannot pretend to actually be everywhere at once in the **PHYSICAL** sense. Instead, he feels that he is the centre and the axis of his "universe", that all things and happenstances revolve around him and that cosmic disintegration would ensue if he were to disappear or to lose interest in someone or in something.

He is convinced, for instance, that he is the main, if not the only, topic of discussion in his absence. He is often surprised and offended to learn that he was not even mentioned. When invited to a meeting with many participants, he assumes the position of the sage, the guru, or the teacher/guide whose words carry a special weight. His creations (books, articles, works of art) are extensions of his presence and, in this restricted sense, he does seem to exist everywhere. In other words, he "stamps" his environment. He "leaves his mark" upon it. He "stigmatises" it.

Narcissist the Omnivore (Perfectionism and Completeness)

There is another "omni" component in grandiosity. The narcissist is an omnivore. He devours and digests experiences and people, sights and smells, bodies and words, books and films, sounds and achievements, his work and his leisure, his pleasure and his possessions. The narcissist is incapable of **ENJOYING** anything because he is in constant pursuit of perfection and completeness.

Classic narcissists interact with the world as predators do with their prey. They want to own it all, be everywhere, experience everything. They cannot delay gratification. They do not take "no" for an answer. And they settle for nothing less than the ideal, the sublime, the perfect, the all-inclusive, the all-encompassing, the engulfing, the all-pervasive, the most beautiful, the cleverest, the richest, and the most brilliant.

The narcissist is shattered when he discovers that a collection he possesses is incomplete, that his colleague's wife is more glamorous, that his son is better than he is in math, that his neighbour has a new, flashy car, that his roommate got promoted, that the "love of his life" signed a recording contract. It is not plain old jealousy, not even pathological envy (though it is definitely a part of the psychological make-up of the narcissist). It is the discovery that the narcissist is **NOT** perfect, or ideal, or complete that does him in.

VIII. Fantasizing as Action-Substitute

What happens to a narcissist who lacks even the basic potential and skills to realise some of his grandiose fantasies?

Such a narcissist resorts to deferred Narcissistic Supply which generates an effect of deferred grandiosity. He forgoes his grandiose schemes and gives up on the present. He defers the fulfilment of his fantasies – which support his inflated Ego – to the (indefinite) future.

Such narcissists engage in activities (or in daydreaming), which they fervently believe, will make them famous, powerful, influential, or superior in some unspecified future time. They keep their minds occupied and off their failures.

Such frustrated and bitter narcissist's hold themselves answerable only to History, God, Eternity, Future Generations, Art, science, the Church, the Country, the Nation and so on. They entertain notions of grandeur which are dependent upon the judgement or assessment of a fuzzily defined collective in an ambiguous time frame. Thus, these narcissists find solace in the embrace of Chronos.

Deferred grandiosity is an adaptive mechanism which ameliorates dysphorias and grandiosity gaps.

IX. Narcissism as a Waste

Ask anyone who shared a life with a narcissist, or knew one and they are likely to sigh: "What a waste". Waste of potential, waste of opportunities, waste of emotions, a wasteland of arid addiction and futile pursuit.

Narcissists are as gifted as they come. The problem is to disentangle their tales of fantastic grandiosity from the reality of their talents and skills. They always either over-estimate or devalue their potency. They often emphasise the wrong traits and invest in their mediocre or less than average capacities at the expense of their true and promising potential. Thus, they squander their advantages and under-rate their natural gifts.

The narcissist decides which aspects of his self to nurture and which to neglect. He gravitates towards activities commensurate with his pompous auto-portrait. He suppresses these tendencies and aptitudes in him which don't conform to his inflated view of his uniqueness,

brilliance, might, sexual prowess, or standing in society. He cultivates these flairs and predilections which he regards as befitting his overweening self-image and ultimate grandeur.

But, the narcissist, no matter how self-aware and well-meaning, is accursed. His grandiosity, his fantasies, the compelling, overriding urge to feel unique, invested with some cosmic significance, unprecedentedly bestowed – these thwart his best intentions. These structures of obsession and compulsion, these deposits of insecurity and pain, the stalactites and stalagmites of years of abuse and then abandonment – they all conspire to frustrate the gratification, however circumspect, of the narcissist's true nature.

An utter lack of self-awareness is typical of the narcissist. He is intimate only with his False Self, constructed meticulously from years of lying and deceit. The narcissist's True Self is stashed, dilapidated and dysfunctional, in the furthest recesses of his mind. The False Self is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, creative, ingenious, irresistible, and glowing. The narcissist often isn't.

Add combustible paranoia to the narcissist's divorce from himself – and his constant and recurrent failure to assess reality fairly is more understandable. The narcissist overpowering sense of entitlement is rarely commensurate with his accomplishments in his real life or with his traits. When the world fails to comply with his demands and to support his grandiose fantasies, the narcissist suspects a plot against him by his inferiors.

The narcissist rarely admits to a weakness, ignorance, or deficiency. He filters out information to the contrary – a cognitive impairment with serious consequences. Narcissistic are likely to unflinchingly make inflated and inane claims about their sexual prowess, wealth, connections, history, or achievements.

All this is mighty embarrassing to the narcissist's nearest, dearest, colleagues, friends, neighbours, or even mere on-lookers. The narcissist's tales are so patently absurd that he often catches people off-guard. Behind his back, the narcissist is derided and mockingly imitated. He fast makes a nuisance and an imposition of himself in every company.

But the narcissist's failure of the reality test can have more serious and irreversible consequences. Narcissists, unqualified to make life-and-death decisions often insist on rendering them. Narcissists pretend to be economists, engineers, or medical doctors – when they are not. But they are not con-artists in the classic, premeditated sense. They firmly believe that, though self-taught at best, they are more qualified than even the properly accredited sort. Narcissists believe in magic and in fantasy. They are no longer with us.

The narcissist often strikes people as "laid back" - or, less charitably: lazy, parasitic, spoiled, and self-indulgent. But, as usual with narcissists, appearances deceive. Narcissists are either compulsively driven over-achievers - or chronic under-achieving wastrels. Most of them fail to make full and productive use of their potential and capacities. Many avoid even the now standard path of an academic degree, a career, or family life.

The disparity between the accomplishments of the narcissist and his grandiose fantasies and inflated self-image - the Grandiosity Gap - is staggering and, in the long run, insupportable. It imposes onerous exigencies on the narcissist's grasp of reality and social skills. It pushes him either to seclusion or to a frenzy of "acquisitions" - cars, women, wealth, power.

Yet, no matter how successful the narcissist is - many of them end up being abject failures - the Grandiosity Gap can never be bridged. The narcissist's False Self is so unrealistic and his Superego so sadistic that there is nothing the narcissist can do to extricate himself from the Kafkaesque trial that is his life.

The narcissist is a slave to his own inertia. Some narcissists are forever accelerating on the way to ever higher peaks and ever greener pastures. Others succumb to numbing routines, the expenditure of minimal energy, and to preying on the vulnerable. But either way, the narcissist's life is out of control, at the mercy of merciless inner voices and internal forces.

Narcissists are one-state machines, programmed to extract Narcissistic Supply from others. To do so, they develop early on a set of immutable routines. This propensity for repetition, this inability to change and rigidity confine the narcissist, stunt his development, and limit his horizons. Add to this his overpowering sense of entitlement, his visceral fear of failure, and his invariable need to both feel unique and be perceived as such - and one often ends up with a recipe for inaction.

The under-achieving narcissist dodges challenges, eludes tests, shirks competition, sidesteps expectations, ducks responsibilities, evades authority - because he is afraid to fail and because doing something everyone else does endangers his sense of uniqueness. Hence the narcissist's apparent "laziness" and "parasitism". His sense of entitlement - with no commensurate accomplishments or investment - aggravates his milieu. People tend to regard such narcissists as "spoiled brats".

In specious contrast, the over-achieving narcissist seeks challenges and risks, provokes competition, embellishes expectations, aggressively bids for responsibilities and authority and seems to be possessed with an eerie self-confidence. People tend to regard such specimen as "entrepreneurial", "daring", "visionary", or "tyrannical". Yet, these narcissists too are mortified by potential failure, driven by a strong conviction of entitlement, and strive to be unique and be perceived as such.

Their hyperactivity is merely the flip side of the under-achiever's inactivity: it is as fallacious and as empty and as doomed to miscarriage and disgrace. It is often sterile or illusory, all smoke and mirrors rather than substance. The precarious "achievements" of such narcissists invariably unravel. They often act outside the law or social norms. Their industriousness, workaholism, ambition, and commitment are intended to disguise their essential inability to produce and build. Theirs is a whistle in the dark, a pretension, a Potemkin life, all make-belief and thunder.

X. The Narcissist's False Modesty

The "modesty" displayed by narcissists is false. It is mostly and merely verbal. It is couched in flourishing phrases, emphasised to absurdity, repeated unnecessarily – usually to the point of causing gross inconvenience to the listener. The real aim of such behaviour and its subtext are exactly the opposite of common modesty.

It is intended to either aggrandise the narcissist or to protect his grandiosity from scrutiny and possible erosion. Such modest outbursts precede inflated, grandiosity-laden statements made by the narcissist and pertaining to fields of human knowledge and activity in which he is sorely lacking.

Devoid of systematic and methodical education, the narcissist tries to make do with pompous, or aggressive mannerisms, bombastic announcements, and the unnecessary and wrong usage of professional jargon. He attempts to dazzle his surroundings with apparent "brilliance" and to put possible critics on the defence.

Beneath all this he is shallow, ignorant, improvising, and fearful of being exposed as deceitful. The narcissist is a conjurer of verbosity, using [sleight of mouth](#) rather than sleight of hand. He is ever possessed by the fear that he is really a petty crook about to be unearthed and reviled by society.

This is a horrible feeling to endure and a taxing, onerous way to live. The narcissist has to protect himself from his own premonitions, from his internal semipternal trial, his guilt, shame, and anxiety. One of the more efficacious defence mechanisms is false modesty.

The narcissist publicly chastises himself for being unfit, unworthy, lacking, not trained and not (formally) schooled, not objective, cognisant of his own shortcomings and vain. This way, if (or, rather, when) exposed he could always say: "But I told you so in the first place, haven't I?" False modesty is, thus an insurance policy. The narcissist "hedges his bets" by placing a side bet on his own fallibility, weakness, deficiencies and proneness to err.

Yet another function is to extract [Narcissistic Supply](#) from the listener. By contrasting his own self-deprecation with a brilliant, dazzling display of ingenuity, wit, intellect, knowledge, or beauty – the narcissist aims to secure an adoring, admiring, approving, or applauding protestation from the listener.

The person to whom the falsely modest statement is addressed is expected to vehemently deny the narcissist's claims: "But, really, you are more of an expert than you say!", or "Why did you tell me that you are unable to do (this or that)? Truly, you are very gifted!" "Don't put yourself down so much - you are a generous man!"

The narcissist then shrugs, smirks, blushes and moves uncomfortably from side to side. This was not his intention, he assures his interlocutor. He did not mean to fish for compliments (exactly what he did mean to do). He really does not deserve the praise. But the aim has, thus, been achieved: the Narcissistic Supply has been doled out and avidly consumed. Despite the narcissist's protestations, he feels much better now.

The narcissist is a dilettante and a charlatan. He glosses over complicated subjects and situations in life. He sails through them powered by shallow acquaintance with rapidly acquired verbal and behavioural vocabularies (which he then promptly proceeds to forget).

False modesty is only one of a series of feigned behaviours. The narcissist is a pathological liar, either implicitly or explicitly. His whole existence is a derivative of a [False Self](#), his deceitful invention and its reflections. With false modesty he seeks to involve others in his mind games, to co-opt them, to force them to collaborate while making ultimate use of social conventions of conduct.

The narcissist, above all, is a shrewd manipulator, well-acquainted with human nature and its fault lines. No narcissist will ever admit to it. In this sense, narcissists are really modest.

XI. Obama's Inner World

Pathological narcissism is a defence mechanism intended to isolate the narcissist from his environment and to shield him from hurt and injury, both real and imagined. Hence the False Self - an all-pervasive psychological construct which gradually displaces the narcissist's True Self. It is a work of fiction intended to elicit praise and deflect criticism.

The unintended consequence of this fictitious existence is a diminishing ability to grasp reality correctly and to cope with it effectively. Narcissistic Supply replaces genuine, veritable, and tested feedback. Analysis, disagreement, and uncomfortable facts are screened out. Layers of bias and prejudice distort the narcissist's experience.

Yet, deep inside, the narcissist is aware that his life is an artefact, a confabulated sham, a vulnerable cocoon. The world inexorably and repeatedly intrudes upon these ramshackle battlements, reminding the narcissist of the fantastic and feeble nature of his grandiosity. This is the much-dreaded Grandiosity Gap.

To avoid the agonizing realization of his failed, defeat-strewn, biography, the narcissist resorts to reality-substitutes. The dynamics are simple: as the narcissist grows older, his Sources of Supply become scarcer, and his Grandiosity Gap yawns wider. Mortified by the prospect of facing his actuality, the narcissist withdraws ever deeper into a dreamland of concocted accomplishments, feigned omnipotence and omniscience, and brattish entitlement.

The narcissist's reality substitutes fulfil two functions. They help him "rationally" ignore painful realities with impunity - and they proffer an alternative universe in which he reigns supreme and emerges triumphant.

The most common form of denial involves persecutory delusions. I described these [elsewhere](#):

"(The narcissist) perceives slights and insults where none were intended. He becomes subject to ideas of reference (people are gossiping about him, mocking him, prying into his affairs, cracking his e-mail, etc.). He is convinced that he is the centre of malign and mal-intentioned attention. People are conspiring to humiliate him, punish him, abscond with his property, delude him, impoverish him, confine him physically or intellectually, censor him, impose on his time, force him to action (or to inaction), frighten him, coerce him, surround and besiege him, change his mind, part with his values, even murder him, and so on."

The narcissist's paranoid narrative serves as an organizing principle. It structures his here and now and gives meaning to his life. It aggrandizes him as worthy of being persecuted. The mere battle with his demons is an achievement not to be sniggered at. By overcoming his "enemies", the narcissist emerges victorious and powerful.

The narcissist's self-inflicted paranoia - projections of threatening internal objects and processes - legitimizes, justifies, and "explains" his abrupt, comprehensive, and rude withdrawal from an ominous and unappreciative world. The narcissist's pronounced misanthropy - fortified by these oppressive thoughts - renders him a schizoid, devoid of all social contact, except the most necessary.

But even as the narcissist divorces his environment, he remains aggressive, or even violent. The final phase of narcissism involves verbal, psychological, situational (and, mercifully,

more rarely, physical) abuse directed at his "foes" and "inferiors". It is the culmination of a creeping mode of psychosis, the sad and unavoidable outcome of a choice made long ago to forego the real in favour of the surreal.

Confabulations are an important part of life. They serve to heal emotional wounds or to prevent ones from being inflicted in the first place. They prop-up the confabulator's self-esteem, regulate his (or her) sense of self-worth, and buttress his (or her) self-image. They serve as organizing principles in social interactions.

Father's wartime heroism, mother's youthful good looks, one's oft-recounted exploits, erstwhile alleged brilliance, and past purported sexual irresistibility - are typical examples of white, fuzzy, heart-warming lies wrapped around a shrivelled kernel of truth.

But the distinction between reality and fantasy is rarely completely lost. Deep inside, the healthy confabulator knows where facts end and wishful thinking takes over. Father acknowledges he was no war hero, though he did his share of fighting. Mother understands she was no ravishing beauty, though she may have been attractive. The confabulator realizes that his recounted exploits are overblown, his brilliance exaggerated, and his sexual irresistibility a myth.

Such distinctions never rise to the surface because everyone - the confabulator and his audience alike - have a common interest to maintain the confabulation. To challenge the integrity of the confabulator or the veracity of his confabulations is to threaten the very fabric of family and society. Human intercourse is built around such entertaining deviations from the truth.

This is where the narcissist differs from others (from "normal" people).

His very self is a piece of fiction concocted to fend off hurt and to nurture the narcissist's grandiosity. He fails in his "reality test" - the ability to distinguish the actual from the imagined. The narcissist fervently believes in his own infallibility, brilliance, omnipotence, heroism, and perfection. He doesn't dare confront the truth and admit it even to himself.

Moreover, he imposes his personal mythology on his nearest and dearest. Spouse, children, colleagues, friends, neighbours - sometimes even perfect strangers - must abide by the narcissist's narrative or face his wrath. The narcissist countenances no disagreement, alternative points of view, or criticism. To him, confabulation **IS** reality.

The coherence of the narcissist's dysfunctional and precariously-balanced personality depends on the plausibility of his stories and on their acceptance by his Sources of Narcissistic Supply. The narcissist invests an inordinate time in substantiating his tales, collecting "evidence", defending his version of events, and in re-interpreting reality to fit his scenario. As a result, most narcissists are self-delusional, obstinate, opinionated, and argumentative.

The narcissist's lies are not goal-orientated. This is what makes his constant dishonesty both disconcerting and incomprehensible. The narcissist lies at the drop of a hat, needlessly, and almost ceaselessly. He lies in order to avoid the Grandiosity Gap - when the abyss between fact and (narcissistic) fiction becomes too gaping to ignore.

The narcissist lies in order to preserve appearances, uphold fantasies, support the tall (and impossible) tales of his False Self and extract Narcissistic Supply from unsuspecting sources, who are not yet on to him. To the narcissist, confabulation is not merely a way of life - but life itself.

We are all conditioned to let other indulge in pet delusions and get away with white, not too egregious, lies. The narcissist makes use of our socialization. We dare not confront or expose him, despite the outlandishness of his claims, the improbability of his stories, the implausibility of his alleged accomplishments and conquests. We simply turn the other cheek, or meekly avert our eyes, often embarrassed.

Moreover, the narcissist makes clear, from the very beginning, that it is his way or the highway. His aggression - even violent streak - are close to the surface. He may be charming in a first encounter - but even then there are [telltale signs](#) of pent-up abuse. His interlocutors sense this impending threat and avoid conflict by acquiescing with the narcissist's fairy tales. Thus he imposes his private universe and virtual reality on his milieu - sometimes with disastrous consequences.

XII. Why Obama is Dangerously Gullible?

"Such a one (the narcissist - SV) is encased, is he not, in an armour - such an armour! The armour of the crusaders was nothing to it - an armour of arrogance, of pride, of complete self-esteem. This armour, it is in some ways a protection, the arrows, the everyday arrows of life glance off it. But there is this danger; Sometimes a man in armour might not even know he was being attacked. He will be slow to see, slow to hear - slower still to feel."

["Dead Man's Mirror" by Agatha Christie in "Hercule Poirot - The Complete Short Stories", Great Britain, HarperCollins Publishers, 1999]

The irony is that narcissists, who consider themselves worldly, discerning, knowledgeable, shrewd, erudite, and astute - are actually more gullible than the average person. This is because they are fake. Their self is [false](#), their life a [confabulation](#), their reality test gone. They live in a fantasy land all their own in which they are the centre of the universe, admired, feared, held in awe, and respected for their omnipotence and omniscience.

Narcissists are prone to magical thinking. They hold themselves immune to the consequences of their actions (or inaction) and, therefore, beyond punishment and the laws of Man. Narcissists are easily persuaded to assume unreasonable risks and expect miracles to happen. They often find themselves on the receiving end of investment scams, for instance.

Narcissists feel entitled to money, power, and honours incommensurate with their accomplishments or toil. The world, or God, or the nation, or society, or their families, co-workers, employers, even neighbours owe them a trouble-free, exalted, and luxurious existence. They are rudely shocked when they are penalized for their misconduct or when their fantasies remain just that.

The narcissist believes that he is destined to greatness - or at least the easy life. He wakes up every morning fully ready for a fortuitous stroke of luck. That explains the narcissist's reckless behaviors and his lazed lack of self-discipline. It also explains why is so easily duped.

By playing on the narcissist's grandiosity and paranoia, it is possible to deceive and manipulate him effortlessly. Just offer him [Narcissistic Supply](#) - admiration, affirmation, adulation - and he is yours. Harp on his insecurities and his persecutory delusions - and he is likely to trust only you and cling to you for dear life.

Narcissists attract abuse. Haughty, exploitative, demanding, insensitive, and quarrelsome, they tend to draw opprobrium and provoke anger and even hatred. Soberly lacking in interpersonal skills, devoid of empathy, and steeped in irksome grandiose fantasies – they invariably fail to mitigate the irritation and revolt that they induce in others.

Successful narcissists are frequently targeted by stalkers and erotomaniacs – usually mentally ill people who develop a fixation of a sexual and emotional nature on the narcissist. When inevitably rebuffed, they become vindictive and even violent.

Less prominent narcissists end up sharing life with co-dependents and [inverted narcissists](#).

The narcissist's situation is exacerbated by the fact that, often, the narcissist himself is an abuser. Like the boy who cried "wolf", people do not believe that the perpetrator of egregious deeds can himself fall prey to maltreatment. They tend to ignore and discard the narcissist's cries for help and disbelieve his protestations.

The narcissist reacts to abuse as would any other victim. Traumatized, he goes through the phases of denial, helplessness, rage, depression, and acceptance. But, the narcissist's reactions are amplified by his shattered sense of omnipotence. Abuse breeds humiliation. To the narcissist, helplessness is a novel experience.

The narcissistic defence mechanisms and their behavioural manifestations – diffuse rage, idealization and devaluation, exploitation – are useless when confronted with a determined, vindictive, or delusional stalker. That the narcissist is flattered by the attention he receives from the abuser, renders him more vulnerable to the former's manipulation.

Nor can the narcissist come to terms with his need for help or acknowledge that wrongful behaviour on his part may have contributed somehow to the situation. His self-image as an infallible, mighty, all-knowing person, far superior to others, won't let him admit to shortfalls or mistakes.

As the abuse progresses, the narcissist feels increasingly cornered. His conflicting emotional needs – to preserve the integrity of his grandiose False Self even as he seeks much needed support – place an unbearable strain on the precarious balance of his immature personality. Decompensation (the disintegration of the narcissist's defence mechanisms) leads to acting out and, if the abuse is protracted, to withdrawal and even to psychotic micro-episodes.

Abusive acts in themselves are rarely dangerous. Not so the reactions to abuse – above all, the overwhelming sense of violation and humiliation. When asked how is the narcissist likely to react to continued mistreatment, I wrote this in one of my [Pathological Narcissism FAQs](#):

"The initial reaction of the narcissist to a perceived humiliation is a conscious rejection of the humiliating input. The narcissist tries to ignore it, talk it out of existence, or belittle its importance. If this crude mechanism of cognitive dissonance fails, the narcissist resorts to

denial and repression of the humiliating material. He "forgets" all about it, gets it out of his mind and, when reminded of it, denies it.

But these are usually merely stopgap measures. The disturbing data is bound to impinge on the narcissist's tormented consciousness. Once aware of its re-emergence, the narcissist uses fantasy to counteract and counterbalance it. He imagines all the horrible things that he would have done (or will do) to the sources of his frustration.

It is through fantasy that the narcissist seeks to redeem his pride and dignity and to re-establish his damaged sense of uniqueness and grandiosity. Paradoxically, the narcissist does not mind being humiliated if this were to make him more unique or to draw more attention to his person.

For instance: if the injustice involved in the process of humiliation is unprecedented, or if the humiliating acts or words place the narcissist in a unique position, or if they transform him into a public figure – the narcissist tries to encourage such behaviours and to elicit them from others.

In this case, he fantasises how he defiantly demeans and debases his opponents by forcing them to behave even more barbarously than before, so that their unjust conduct is universally recognised as such and condemned and the narcissist is publicly vindicated and his self-respect restored. In short: martyrdom is as good a method of obtaining [Narcissist Supply](#) as any.

Fantasy, though, has its limits and once reached, the narcissist is likely to experience waves of self-hatred and self-loathing, the outcomes of helplessness and of realising the depths of his dependence on Narcissistic Supply. These feelings culminate in severe self-directed aggression: depression, [destructive, self-defeating behaviours](#) or suicidal ideation.

These self-negating reactions, inevitably and naturally, terrify the narcissist. He tries to project them on to his environment. He may decompensate by developing obsessive-compulsive traits or by going through a psychotic microepisode.

At this stage, the narcissist is suddenly besieged by disturbing, uncontrollable violent thoughts. He develops ritualistic reactions to them: a sequence of motions, an act, or obsessive counter-thoughts. Or he might visualise his aggression, or experience auditory hallucinations. Humiliation affects the narcissist this deeply.

Luckily, the process is entirely reversible once Narcissistic Supply is resumed. Almost immediately, the narcissist swings from one pole to another, from being humiliated to being elated, from being put down to being reinstated, from being at the bottom of his own, imagined, pit to occupying the top of his own, imagined, hill."

DISCLAIMER

I am not a mental health professional. Still, I have dedicated the last 12 years to the study of personality disorders in general and the Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) in particular. I have authored nine (9) books about these topics, one of which is a Barnes and Noble best-seller ("[Malignant Self-love: Narcissism Revisited](#)"). My work is widely cited in scholarly tomes and publications and in the media. My books and the content of my Web site are based

on correspondence since 1996 with hundreds of people suffering from the Narcissistic Personality Disorder (narcissists) and with thousands of their family members, friends, therapists, and colleagues.

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DISCLAIMERS

1. I am not a mental health professional. Still, I have dedicated the last 12 years to the study of personality disorders in general and the Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) in particular. I have authored nine (9) books about these topics, one of which is a Barnes and Noble best-seller ("[Malignant Self-love: Narcissism Revisited](#)"). My work is widely cited in scholarly tomes and publications and in the media. My books and the content of my Web site are based on correspondence since 1996 with hundreds of people suffering from the Narcissistic Personality Disorder (narcissists) and with thousands of their family members, friends, therapists, and colleagues.

2. Only a qualified mental health diagnostician can determine whether someone suffers from Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) and this, following lengthy tests and personal interviews. But, in the absence of access to Barack Obama, one has to rely on his overt performance and on testimonies by his closest, nearest and dearest.